

Behavioral Health Denial Code Guide

The most common denial reasons in behavioral health billing, what causes them, and the fix — for psychiatry, therapy, ABA, and SUD claims.

Top denial reasons & fixes

DENIAL REASON	WHAT CAUSES IT	HOW TO PREVENT IT
Prior auth expired	Authorization runs out mid-treatment; session-based care means auth doesn't cover an open-ended course.	Track authorization by remaining session count per patient, not by calendar reminder alone.
Medical necessity not established	Documentation doesn't clearly support ongoing treatment need for the specific payer's standard.	Document functional impairment and treatment response at every session, not just at intake.
Incorrect time-based coding	Add-on psychotherapy codes billed without matching session length documentation.	Record actual session start/end times; match CPT code to documented duration.
Telehealth POS/modifier mismatch	Place of service or modifier doesn't match current payer telehealth policy.	Confirm each payer's current telehealth rules before submission — they vary and change.
CoCM/BHI billed without APCM base	New 2026 add-on codes (G0568–G0570) submitted without a qualifying base code in the same month.	Verify APCM base code (G0556–G0558) is present before adding CoCM/BHI codes.
Group vs. individual mismatch	Group therapy billed with individual session codes, or vice versa.	Confirm session format matches the code family before submission.

2026 code reference

CODE	USE
G0568	Initial month of Collaborative Care Model (CoCM) services, add-on to APCM base code, based on CPT 99492.
G0569	Subsequent CoCM months, add-on to APCM base code, based on CPT 99493.
G0570	General behavioral health integration (BHI), add-on to APCM base code, based on CPT 99484.

Telehealth note: Behavioral and mental health services retain audio-only telehealth billing eligibility through December 31, 2027 under current CMS/HHS policy — the broadest allowance of any specialty. Non-behavioral services face shorter timelines, so confirm which rule applies per service type.